Governing Science in the California Delta

Some thoughts from Mark Lubell

UC Davis

Delta Stewardship Council Science Governance Panel

9/27/2018

Agenda Item 8

Perspectives on Governance

Collective Decision-making Rules (Lemos and Agrawal)

"the set of regulatory processes, mechanisms and organizations through which political actors influence environmental actions and outcomes."

Network Governance (Provan and Kenis)

"focus on governance involves the use of institutions and structures of authority and collaboration to allocate resources and to coordinate and control joint action across the network as a whole"

Collaborative Governance (Emerson et al.)

"the processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished."

Adaptive Governance (Folke et al.)

"polycentric form of social coordination in which actions are coordinated voluntarily by individuals and organizations with self-organizing and self-enforcing capabilities…. involves devolution of management rights and power sharing that promotes participation"
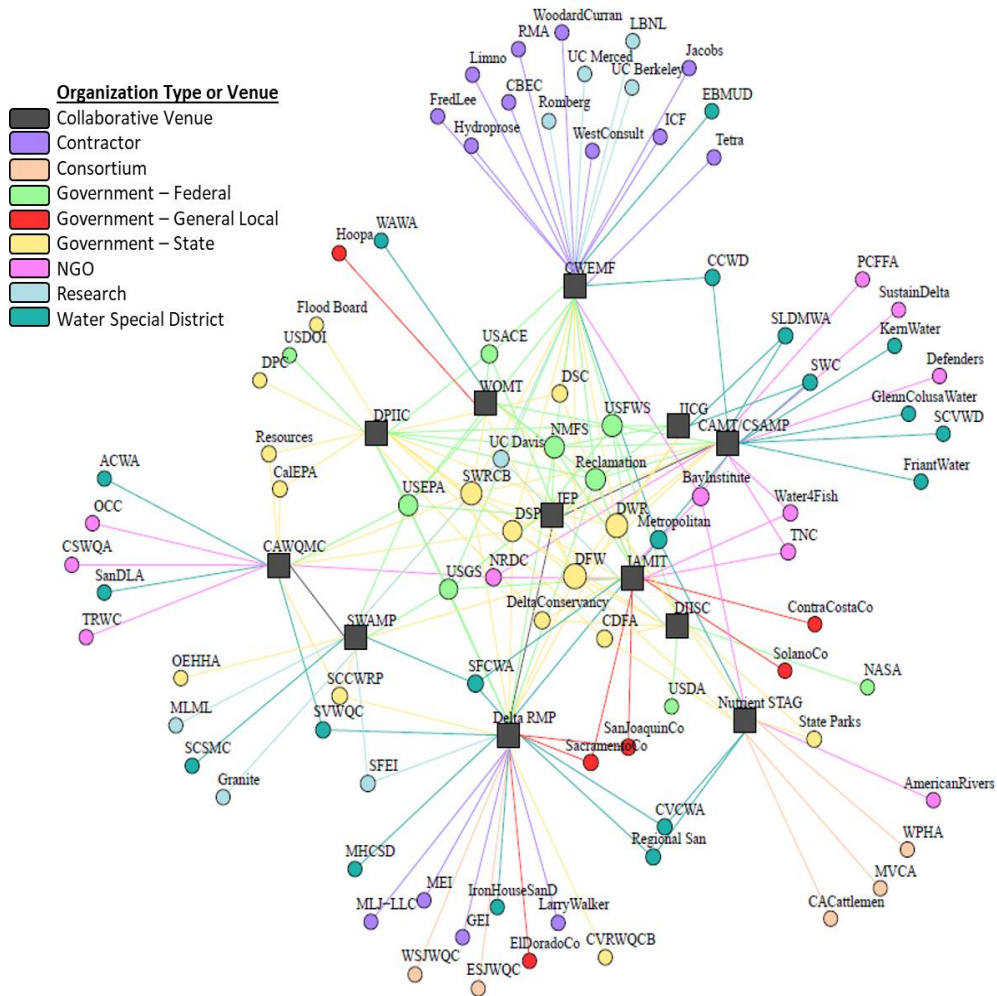
(Science) Governance is Messy!

Figure 1. The collaborative Delta science governance Full Network, showing the main 12 collaborative Delta science venues (black) and all of the organizations (colors) that participate in at least one such venue. Organizations are connected with ties (gray) to venues if they participate in that venue.
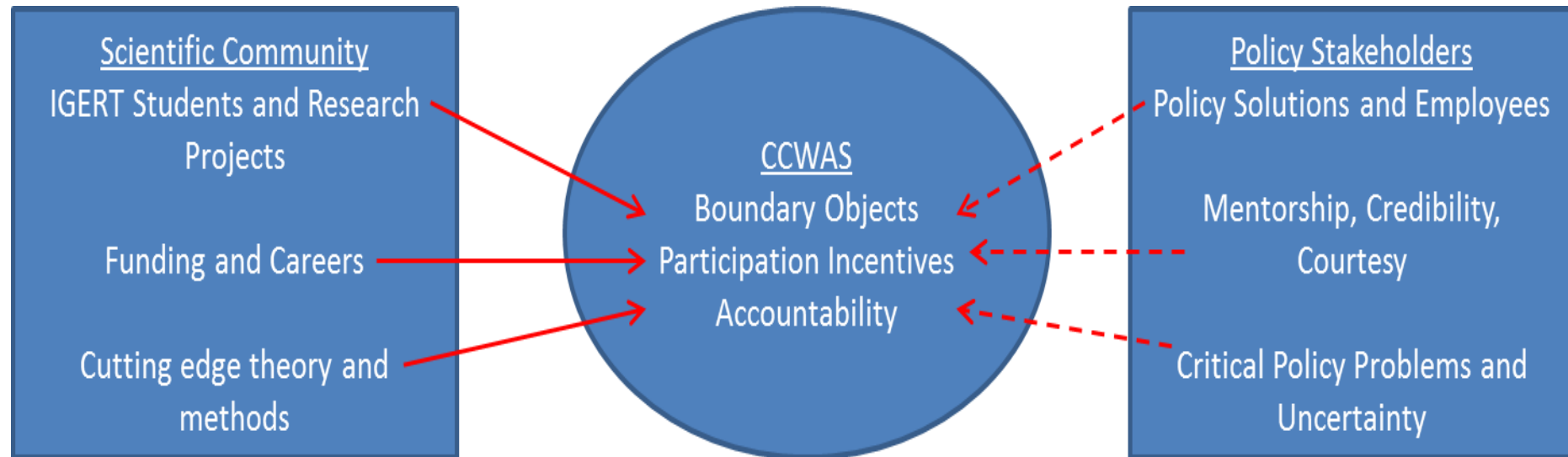
*"**Public policy is almost always a mess. Let's acknowledge the inevitable and figure out how to manage a messy situation.** Trying to define a policy "problem" is hard enough. Trying to find a solution is even harder. Trying to do either in a policy-making structure in which everyone is involved, but nobody is in charge, is nearly impossible."*
--Phil Isenberg, 2016

Network Visualization Credit
Matthew Robbins, Delta Science Program – Science Plan and Infrastructure Unit
During his fellowship, Robbins will support the Delta Stewardship Council in its effort to increase the representation of social science in the Delta Science Plan.

(Science) Governance Requires Spanning Boundaries
….especially between science and policy…and agencies…and interests…etc
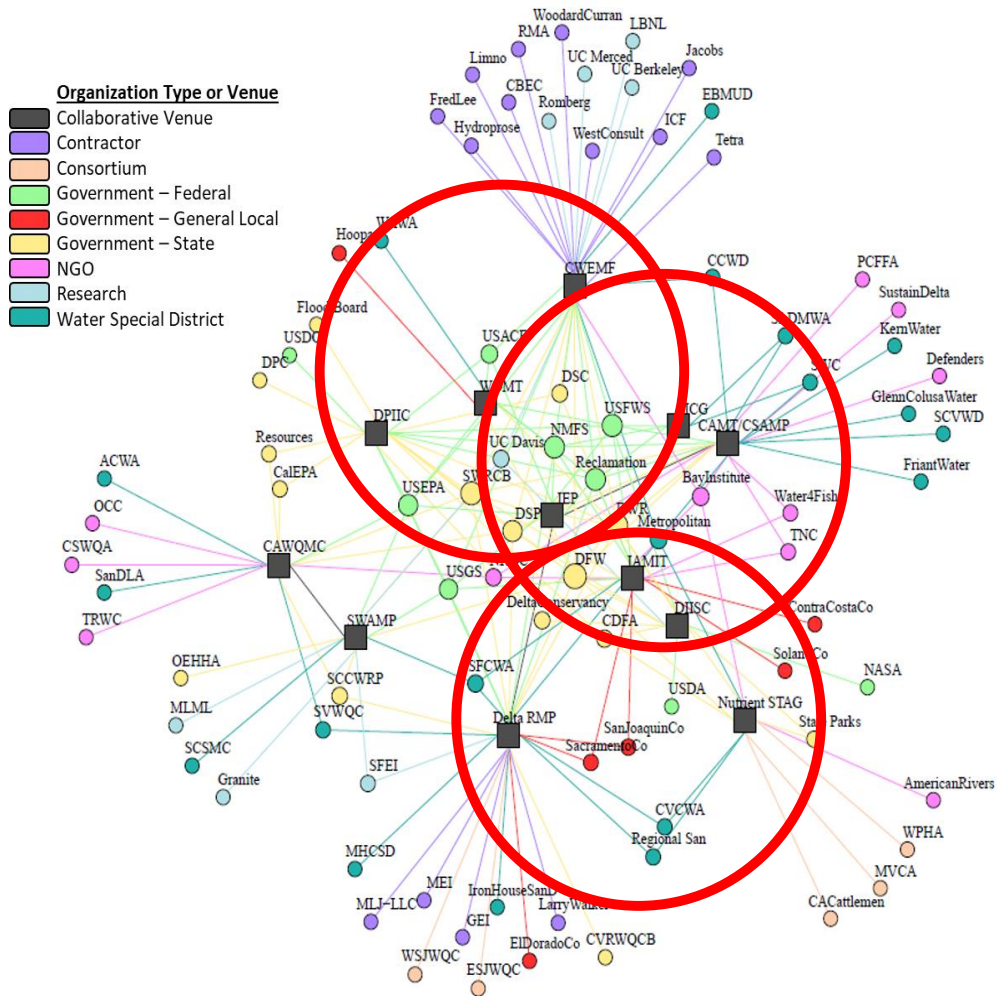
Potential Goals of Science Governance

- Identify "best available science"
- Forge agreement among stakeholders about "what is real"
- Deliver scientific knowledge to the right people, at the right place, at the right time
- Sustainably fund scientific research
- Allow innovation and capacity to research new problems, methods
- Translate science into policy terms
- Integrate diverse types of sources of knowledge across network
- Maintain legitimacy of science as neutral party
- Others?

Does the JPA provide marginal benefits?

- "No single state agency has authority or capacity to guide the implementation of the ecosystem management actions…" (No single JPA has authority to govern all science…???

- JPA proposal linked only to Water Quality Control Plan: Too narrow

- Funneling all science through JPA will be too inflexible; prevent innovation at the edges

- Will concentrate power among those in the "club"

- The money part is useful though—sustained commitment from more agencies, rather than intermittent or limited permanent funds

Which Boundaries would a JPA Span?

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